

# **Review of Mesozoic Exploration Plays in the Montenegro - NW Albania Segment of South Adriatic Basin\***

**Zamir Bega<sup>1</sup> and Z. Schleder<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup>Consultant, Tirana, Albania ([begazamir447@gmail.com](mailto:begazamir447@gmail.com))

<sup>2</sup>Exploration, OMV Petrom, Bucharest, Romania

## **Abstract**

We suggest that Montenegro and NW Albania share the same Mesozoic platform plays. The basis for this model is the vast geological and geophysical data gathered during mid-90's and early 2000. This data set can be interpreted so that it allows for the presence of another hydrocarbon province yet to be found in the NW Albania–Montenegro region. This new play consists of deep seated contractional structures made up of Mesozoic platform units that are buried underneath the frontal zones of the thin-skinned Kruja - Dalmatian thrust belt. We use two balanced regional profiles that connect on-, and offshore Montenegro and Albania, respectively, to speculate on the structural configuration of the shallow and the deep levels. The shallow, thin-skinned thrust belt has a westward vergence with the structures implying a shortening of about 50 kilometres. The main detachment horizon is the Oligocene shales for this level. Seismic and gravity data suggests that this thin-skinned belt was subsequently folded by a deeper system of thrusts. These deep thrust slices are interpreted to detach on the Triassic salt level and accommodate shortening of about 10 km. At shallower levels, both shortening are accommodated by regional back thrusts (Durrës-Palla and Ishëm-Preza-Rodoni). We suggest that the most important play type in this area is this structurally inverted platform carbonates. These deeply buried platform carbonate antiforms resemble those in the Southern Apennines of Italy. Likewise in Southern Apennines, the Cretaceous marls and shales are considered as primary oil and wet gas prone source rocks. A deep SE-NW trending anticlinorium with platform carbonate units is interpreted in onshore Albania–Montenegro region. The anticlinorium, which is stretched for about 140 km towards onshore Montenegro comprises a cluster of several structural closures. The structural inversion is relatively young and it is related to post-Miocene deformations.

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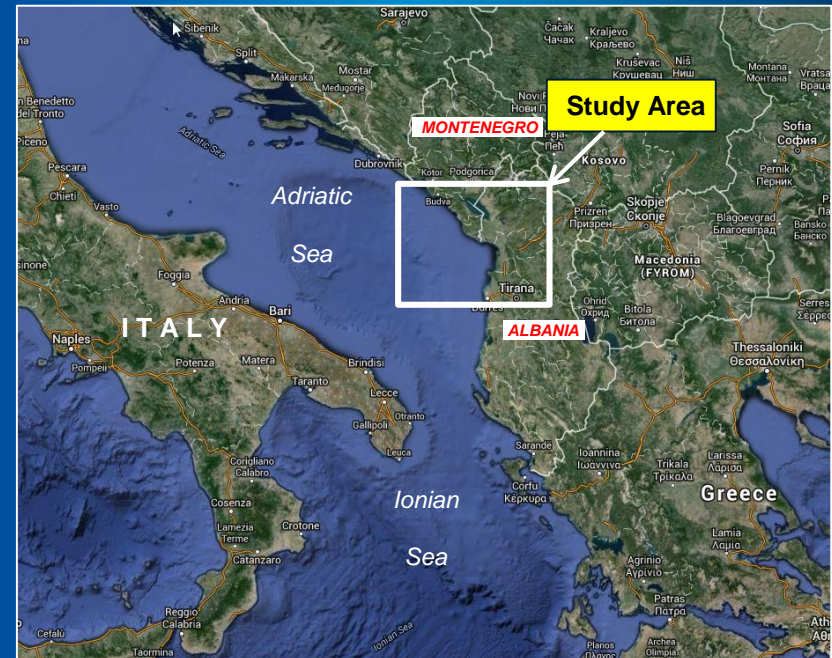
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# ***Review of Mesozoic Exploration Plays in the Montenegro – NW Albania Segment of South Adriatic Basin***

**Presented at AAPG, May 19-20, 2016, Bucharest  
Romania**

**Z. Bega , Consultant , Tirana, Albania  
Z. Schleder, OMV Petrom, Romania**

Houston, ACE April 2-5, 2017.



**OMV Petrom**

# Content

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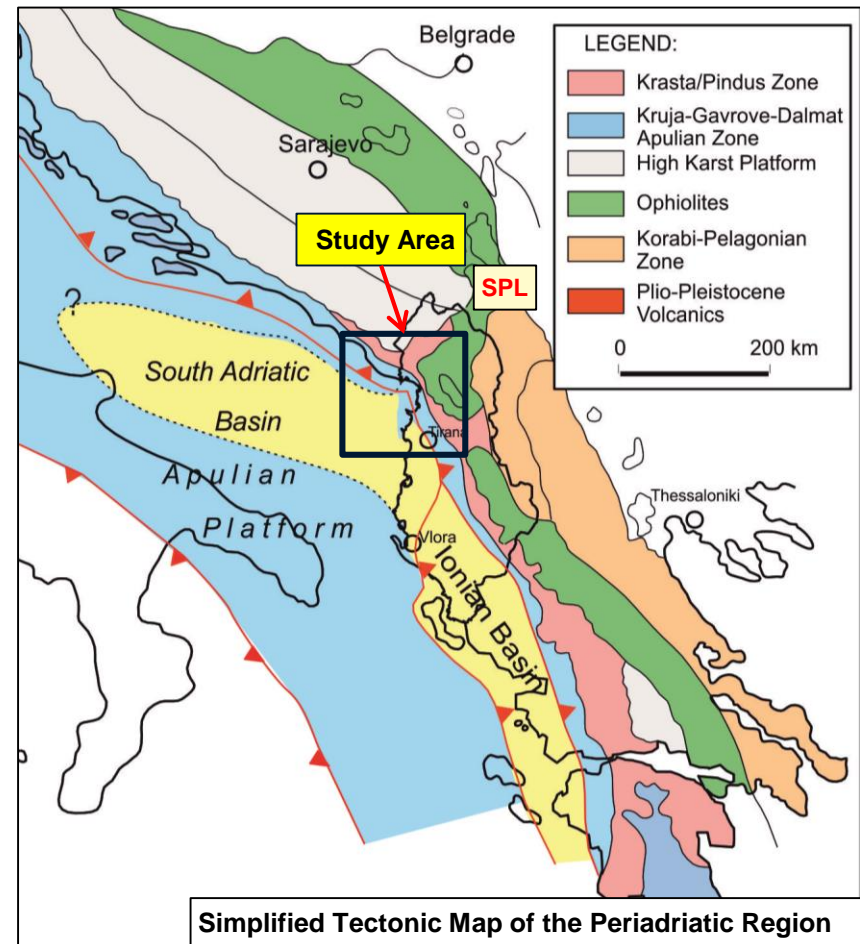
- ▶ Study Area
- ▶ Regional Tectonic Framework
- ▶ Key Paleo-geographic Units and Petroleum System
- ▶ Forward Thrust Modelling of Two Regional Transects:  
First Pass.
- ▶ Major Mesozoic Plays Through Seismic Examples
- ▶ Conclusions



# Study Area:

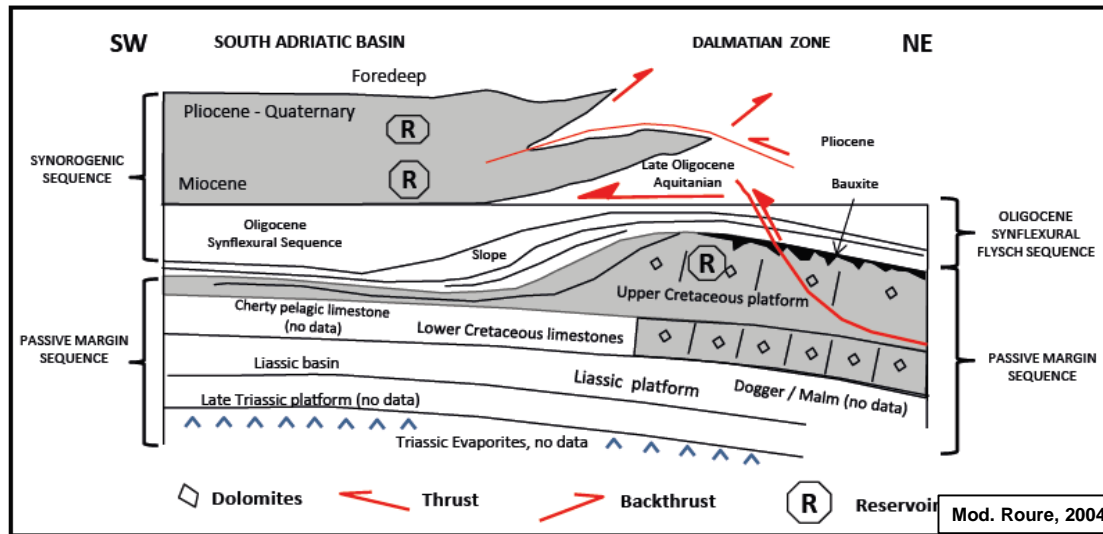
## Montenegro – NW Albania Segment

- Study area comprises the SE edge of the South Adriatic Basin (SAB), partly masked by westward verging thrust sheets of Dinarides-Albanides fold-and-thrust belts.
- The geo-dynamic model has been strongly controlled by:
  - Mesozoic post- rift architecture
  - the post- Oligocene CWR of Dinarides – Albanides fold belts
  - the deep-rooted Scutari-Pec Transversal Lineament (SPL).



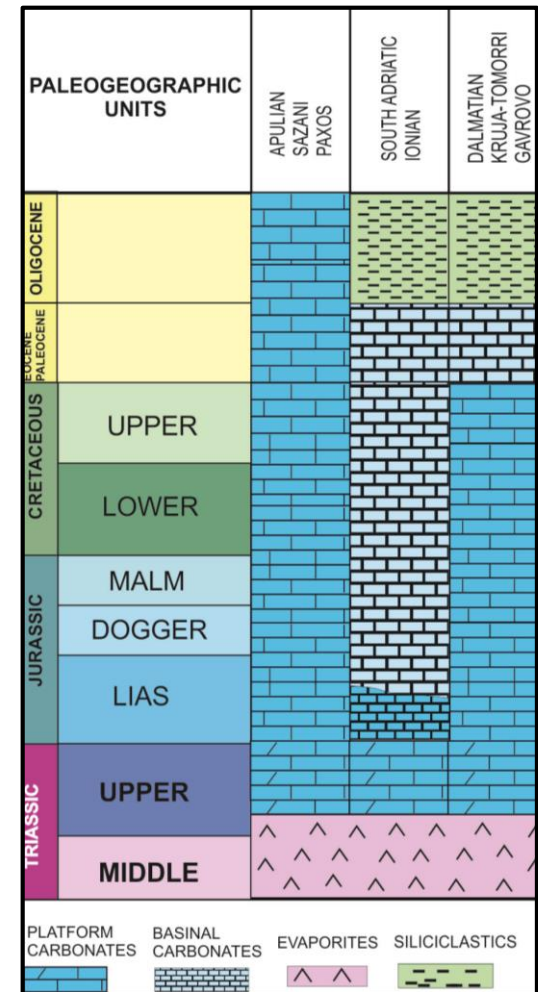


# South Adriatic Basin: Key Paleogeographic Units



## Apulian Foreland ramp:

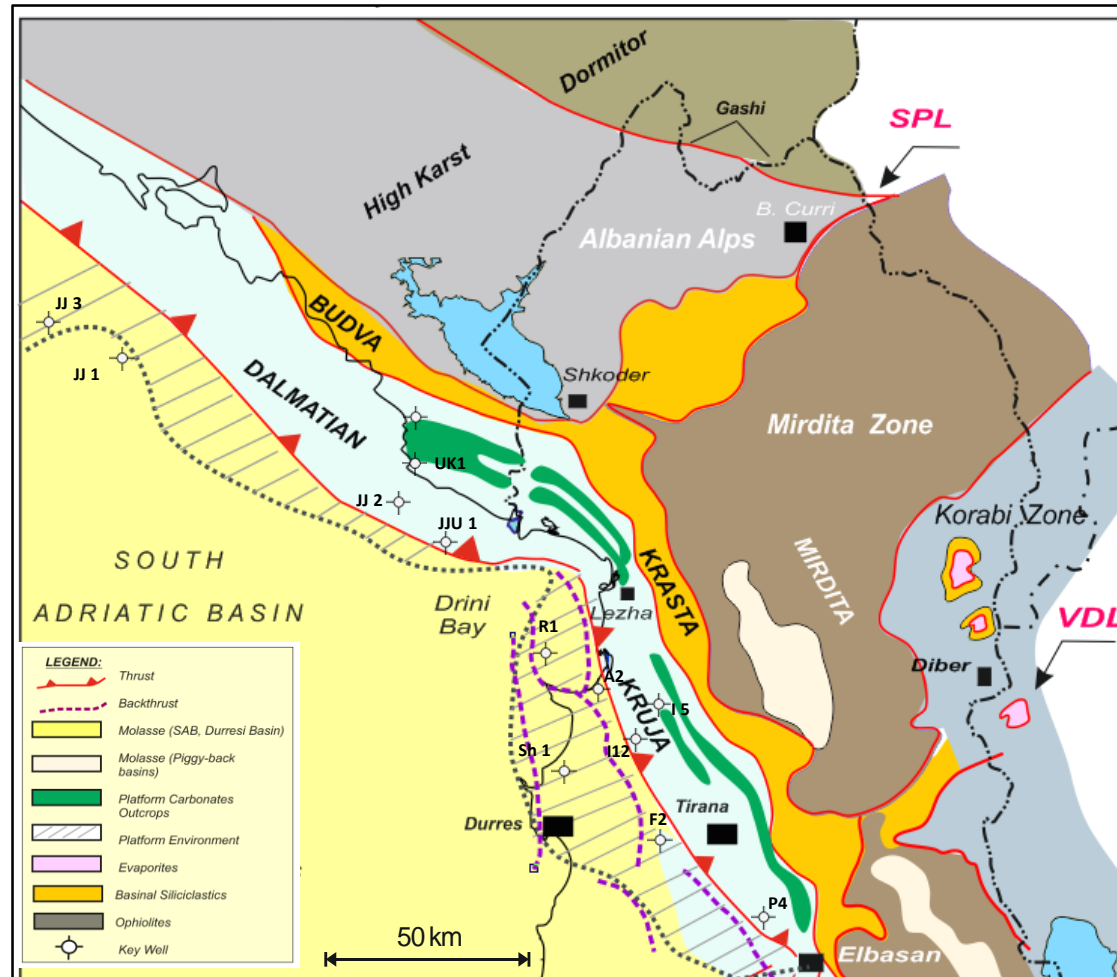
- Persistent shallow-water deposition conditions over Apulia-Dalmatian-Kruja throughout Mesozoic ( ~ 5 – 7 km thick).
- Deep water condition within SAB/Ionian basins, post-Early Jurassic (~ 2.5 – 3.0 km thick).
- Post-Oligocene thrusting continued up to the Pliocene, causing:
  - Dalmatin-Kruja thin-skinned thrusts.
  - Inversion and thrusting of the thick-skinned sequence.
  - Two parallel sets of Neogene back-thrusts due to thin- and thick-skinned deformation.
  - Eastward tilting of the Apulian foreland.





# Tectonic Map: Close Up View

- **Three major tectonic elements are present:**
  - Undeformed foreland (South Adriatic Basin) to the West
  - Deformed foreland (Central)
  - Dalmatian-Kruja thin-skinned assemblage to the East
- **Diverted orientation across the SPL.**
- **A series of regional Neogene backthrust systems** are observed on the Albanian side, which are missing entirely in Montenegro.
- The backthrusts are facilitated by:
  - Larger overall thrust displacement is in the South.
  - Sub-surface morphology (thin- and thick-skin buried geometries).



# Petroleum Systems

## Montenegro-NW Albania

Chrono Stratigraphy		Thickness (m)	Lithology	Petroleum Potential			HC Occurrences
Quarter.				SR	Reservoir	Seal	
Neogene	Pleistocene - Pliocene	0-3000m					Albanian fields Italian fields Adriatic Post-Orogenic Foredeep
	Miocene	0-1500m					Albanian fields Italian fields Dalmatian/Ionian Compression
Palaeogene	Oligocene	0-4000m					Foredeep Flysch Sedimentation
	U-M Eoc	50 - 200m					
Cretaceous	Upper	1000 - 4000m					Ionian/Dalmatian Rifting JJ3, Albanian fields Italian fields
	Lower	1000 - 4000m					
Triassic	Mid-Upper	1000m					

### Reservoir

Pleistocene-Pliocene-Miocene turbidite sands  
Oligocene turbidite sands  
**Cretaceous – Eocene shelf edge & platform carbonates**

### Source

**Mid Eocene – Cretaceous shale and marls, as primary oil and wet gas prone**  
Plio-Miocene shale – dry gas prone

### Traps

**Carbonate shelf margin reef / topographic buildups**  
**Structural closures of autochthonous platform carbonates structures**  
Structural and stratigraphic traps (Tertiary turbidite)

### Seal

Intra formation shale of Pleistocene-Pliocene-Miocene  
**Oligocene deep water shale as regional top seal for platform carbonates**

### Plays

Pleistocene-Pliocene-Miocene sands charged with dry gas  
Oligocene sands charged with wet gas  
• **Platform and shelf margin charged with Eocene-Cretaceous oil**  
• **Inverted structural closures of autochthonous platform carbonates**

Bega, 2015

Oil field  
 Gas field

# Rationale

## Outstanding question:

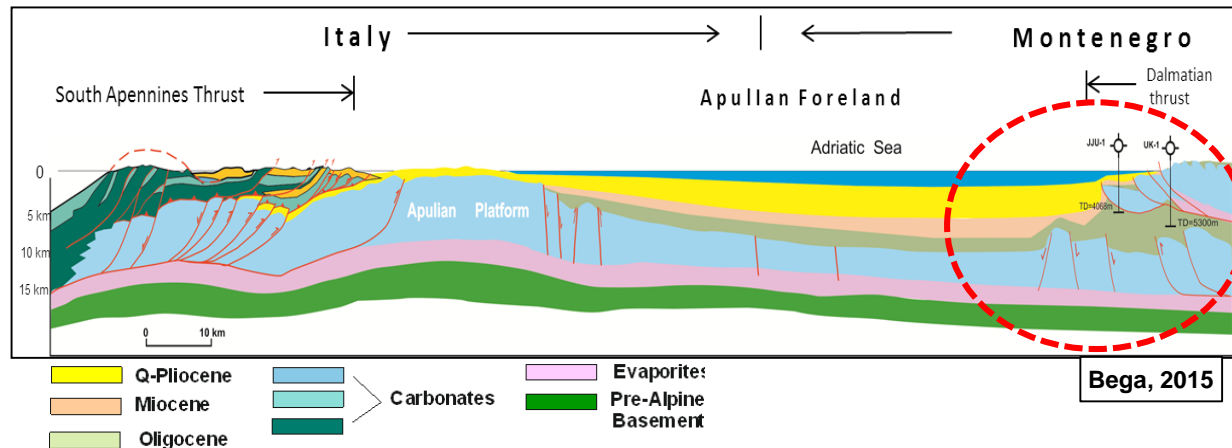
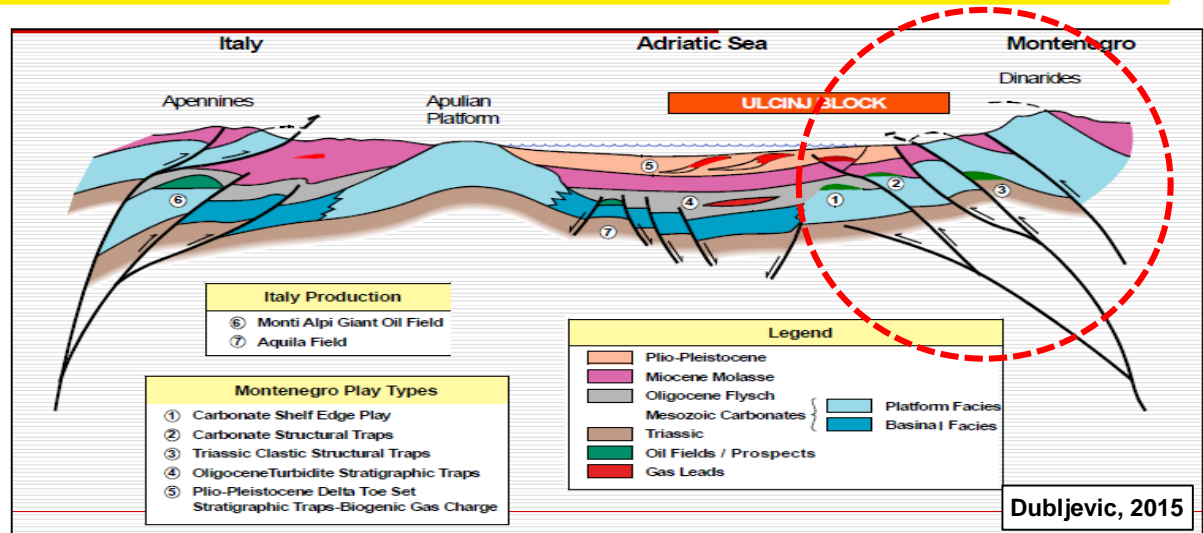
- Different structural models have been proposed for Mesozoic plays in Montenegro and NW Albania segment.
- The implications: different key plays to deal with.

## Approach:

- Forward thrust model: 1<sup>st</sup> pass
- Structural modelling only; w/o geochemical constrain.

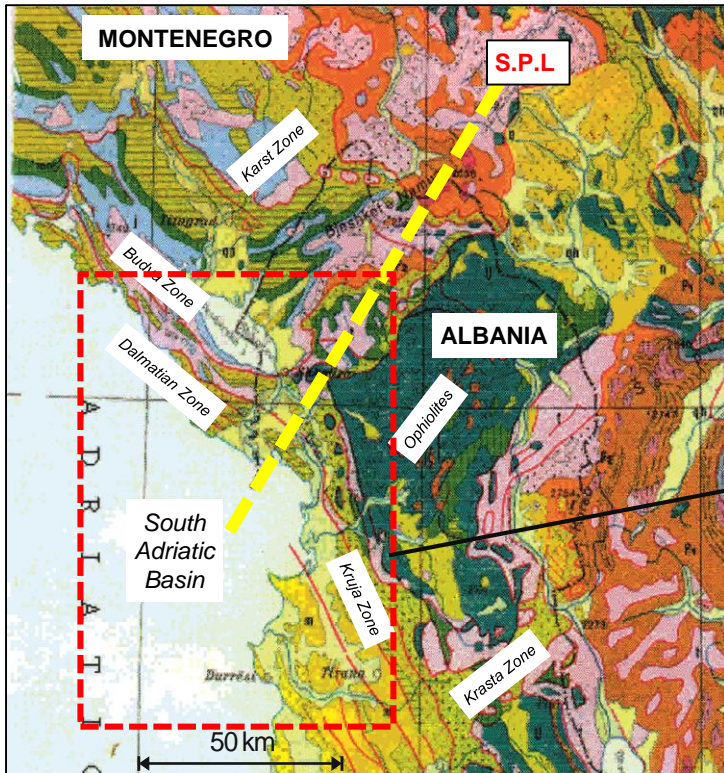
## Goal:

- Demonstrate the most likely structural model in North and South of SPL
- Demonstrate same litho-stratigraphy for thin- & thick-skin assemblage.
- Help to validate the Mesozoic plays in both sectors

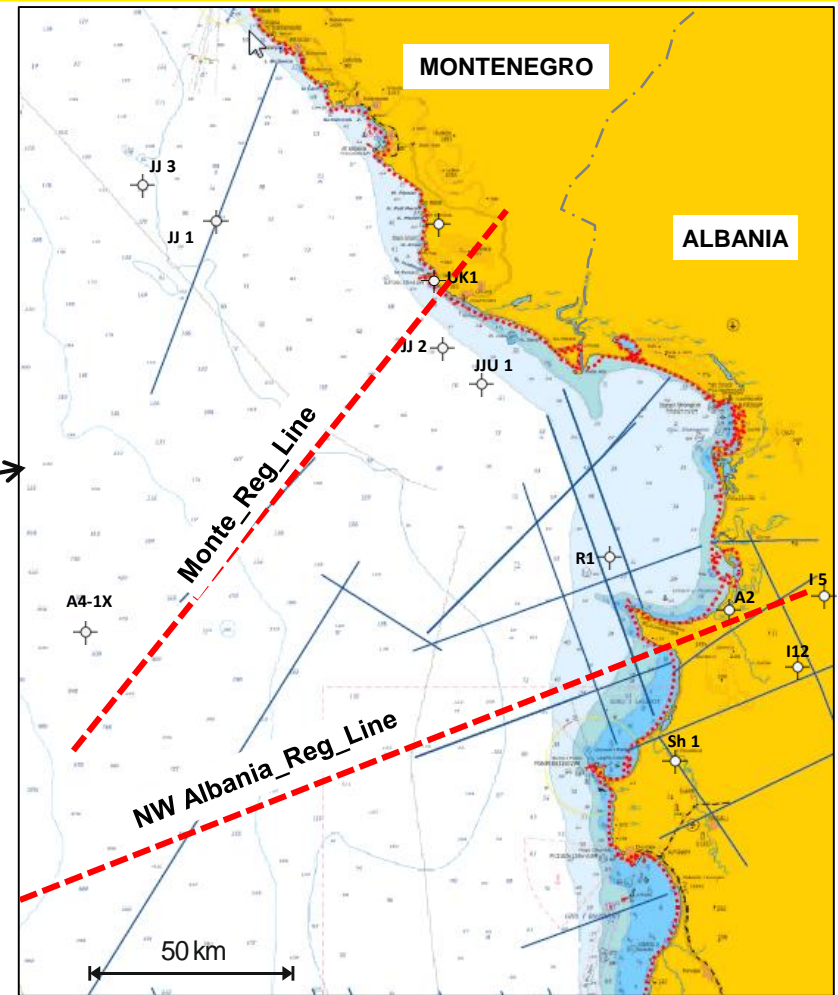


# Data Base

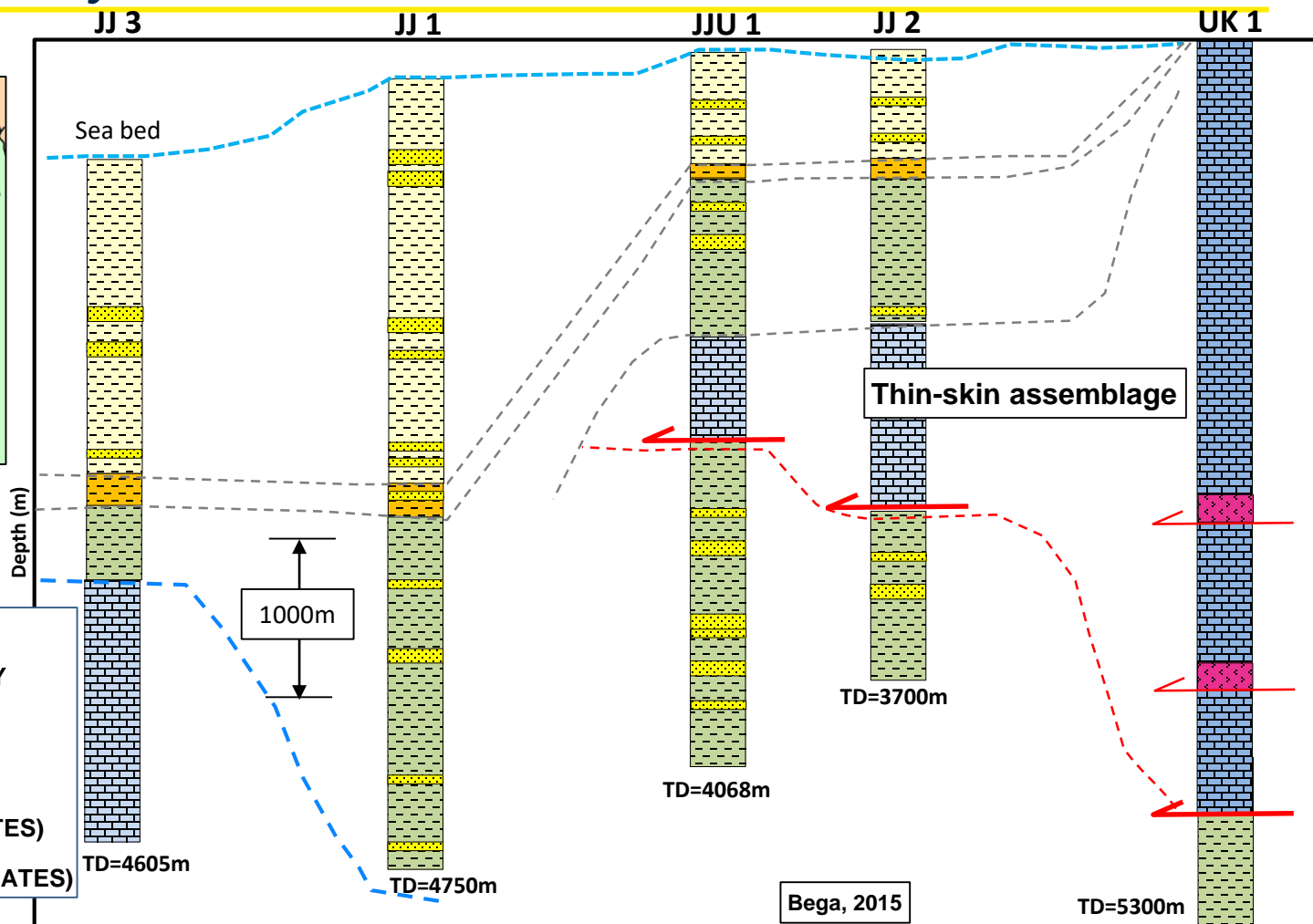
## Geological & Geophysical Data Base



- Geological maps combined with Google Earth 3D topo view.
- Key seismic lines; handful of deep wells (formation tops); and velocities have been used to build the depth model.
- Two transects have been selected on each side of SPL
- The transects are almost perpendicular with structural trends



# Montenegro: Off – Onshore Key Wells



## Legend:

MAJOR THRUST  
KEY UNCONFORMITY

PLIOCENE

MIOCENE

OLIGOCENE

TRIASSIC (EVAPORITES)

MESOZOIC (CARBONATES)

Bega, 2015

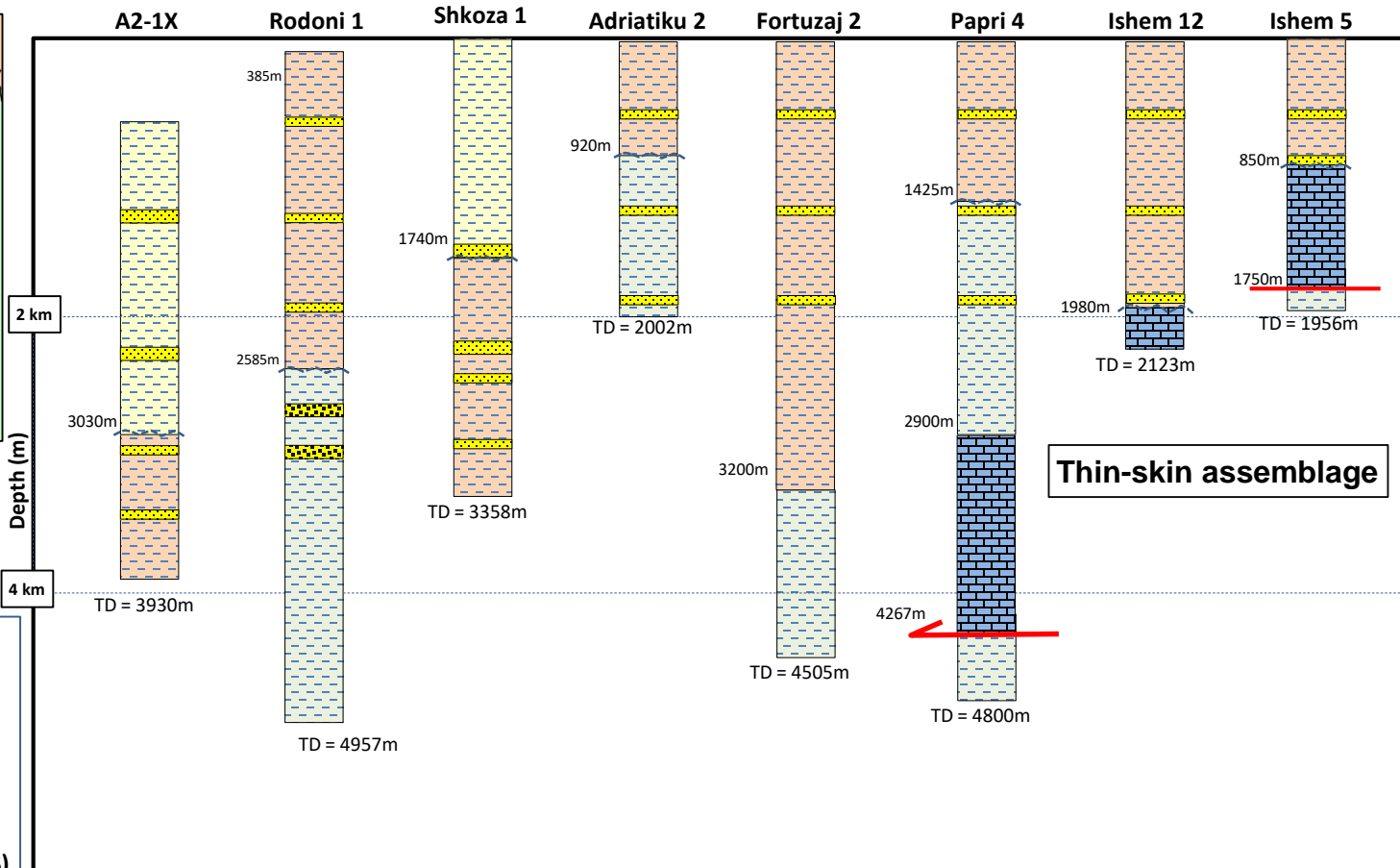
TD=5300m





# NW Albania:

## Key Wells at Rodoni – Ishem - Paper Region

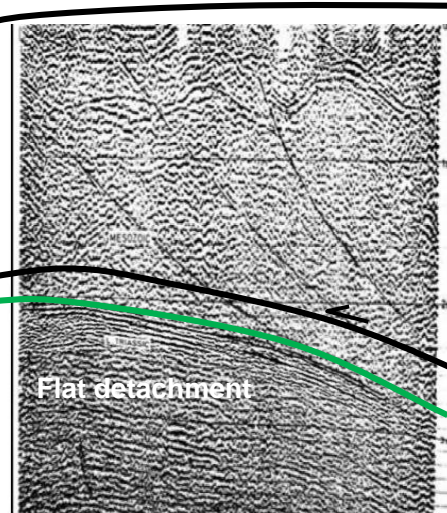
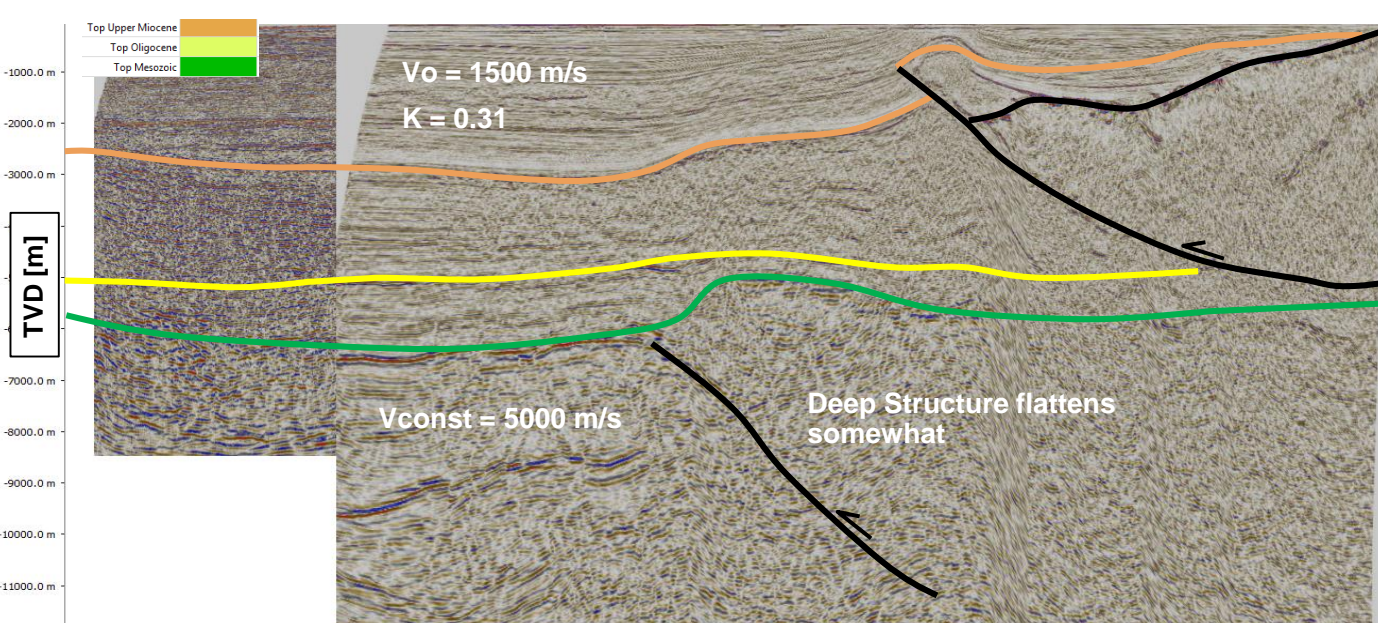
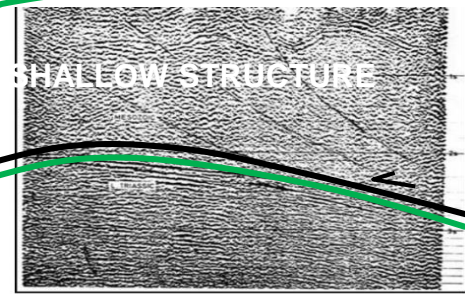
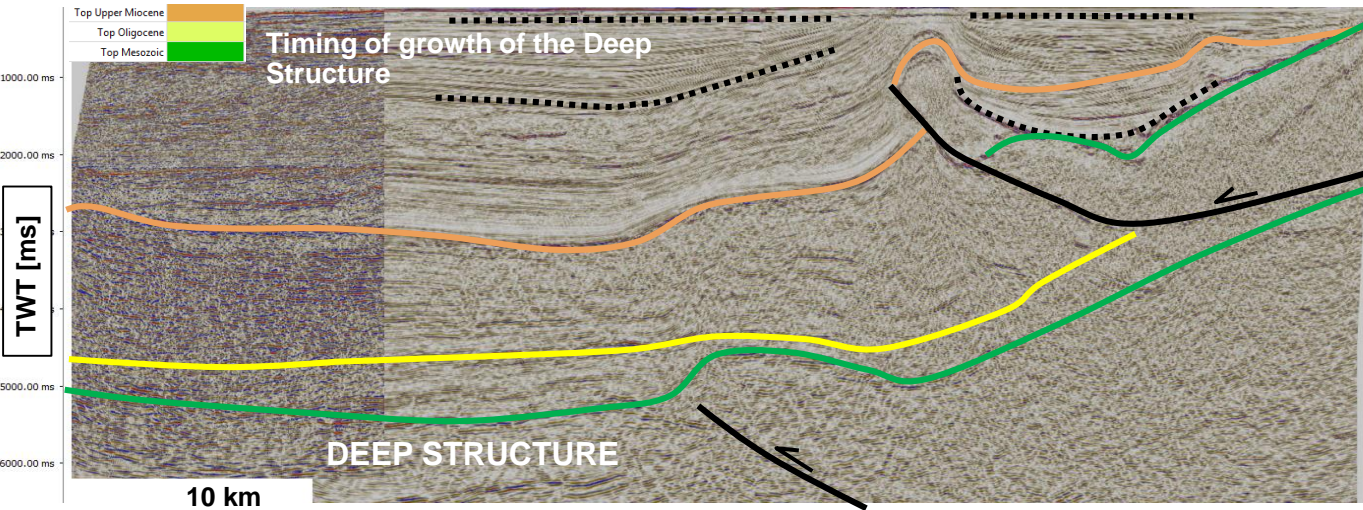


# Montenegro Regional Line

SW

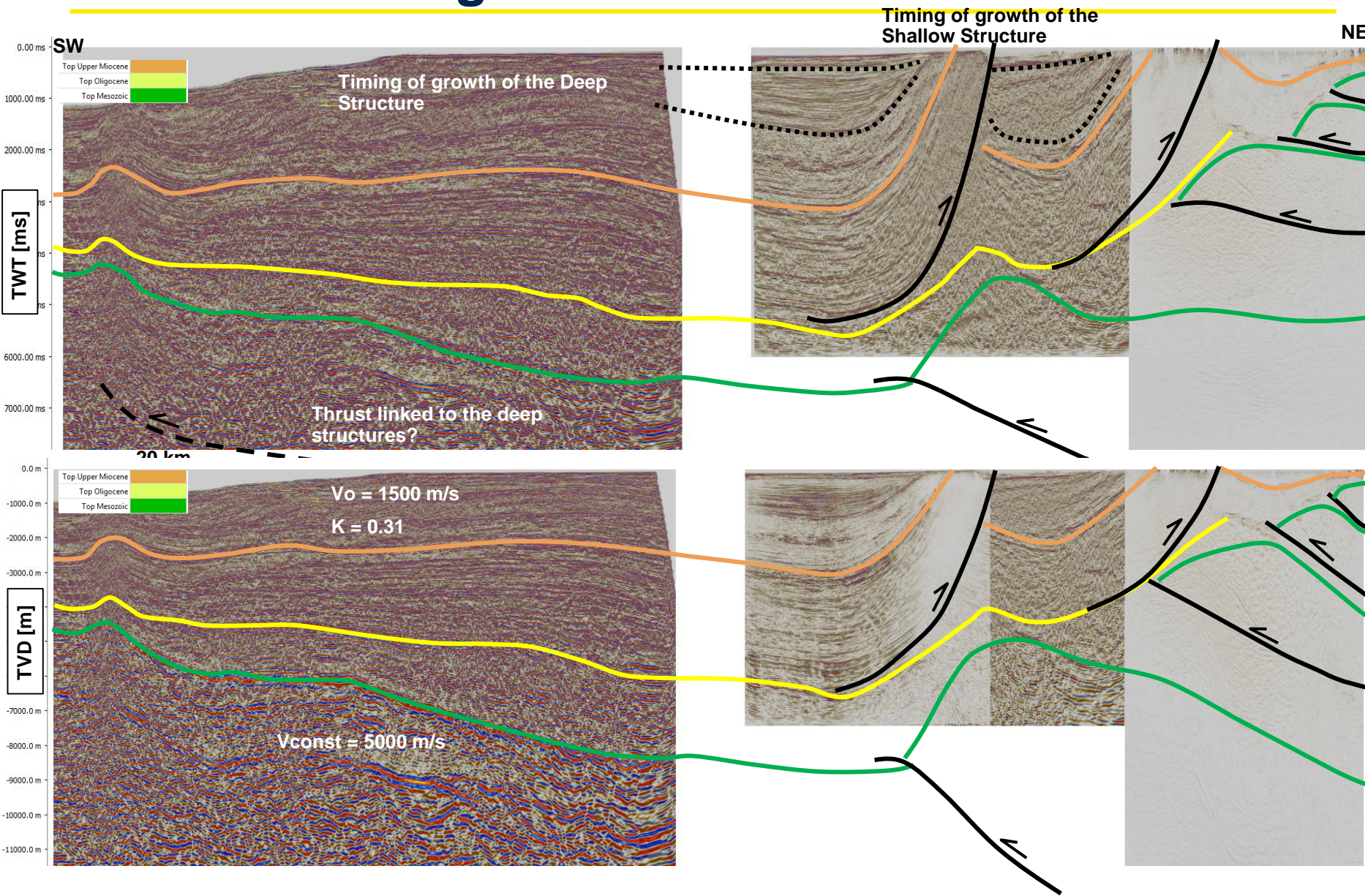
Timing of growth of the Shallow Structure

NE



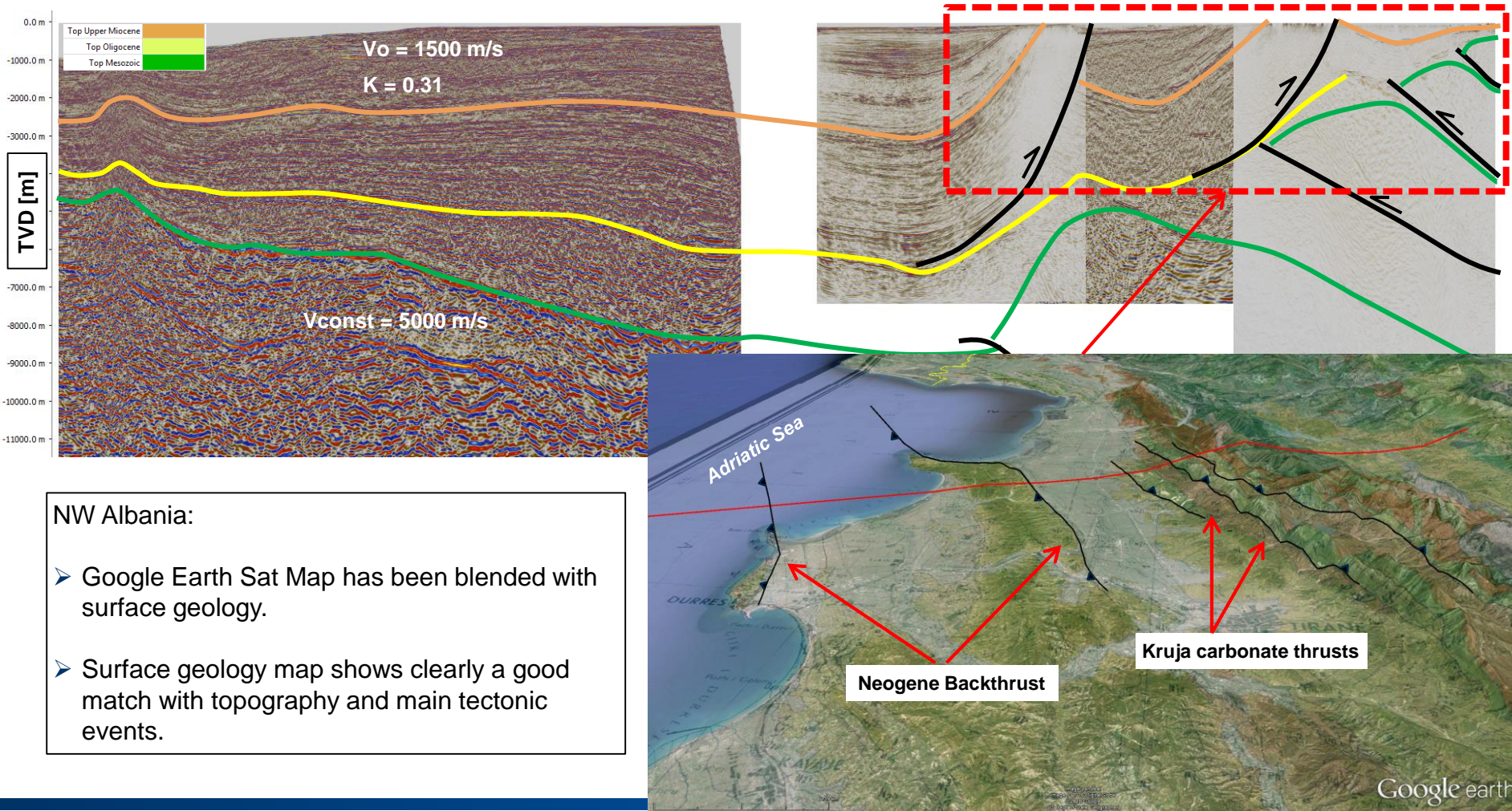


# NW Albania Regional Line





# NW Albania Regional Line & Surface Tectonics



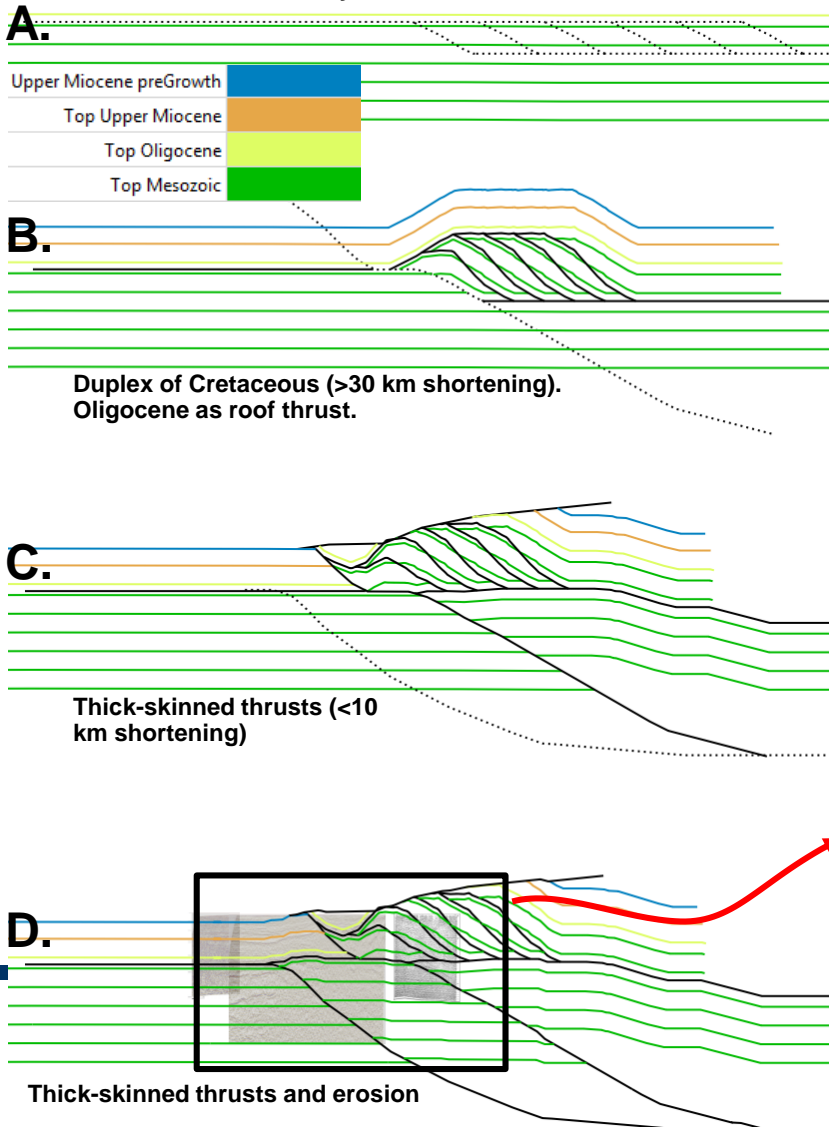
NW Albania:

- Google Earth Sat Map has been blended with surface geology.
- Surface geology map shows clearly a good match with topography and main tectonic events.

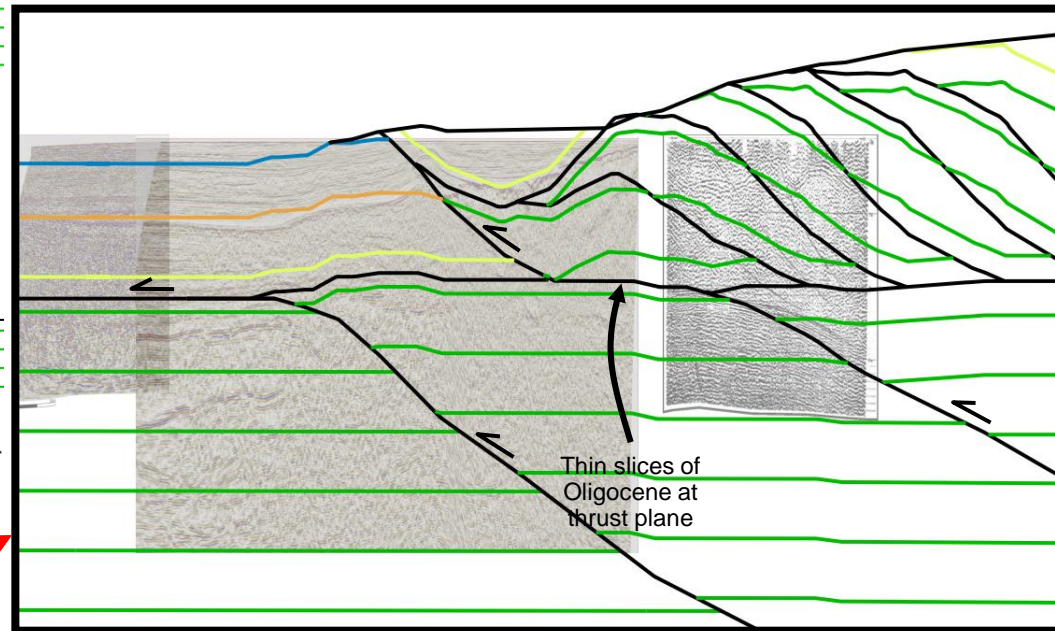


# Montenegro Regional Line

Only frontal thrusts modelled!



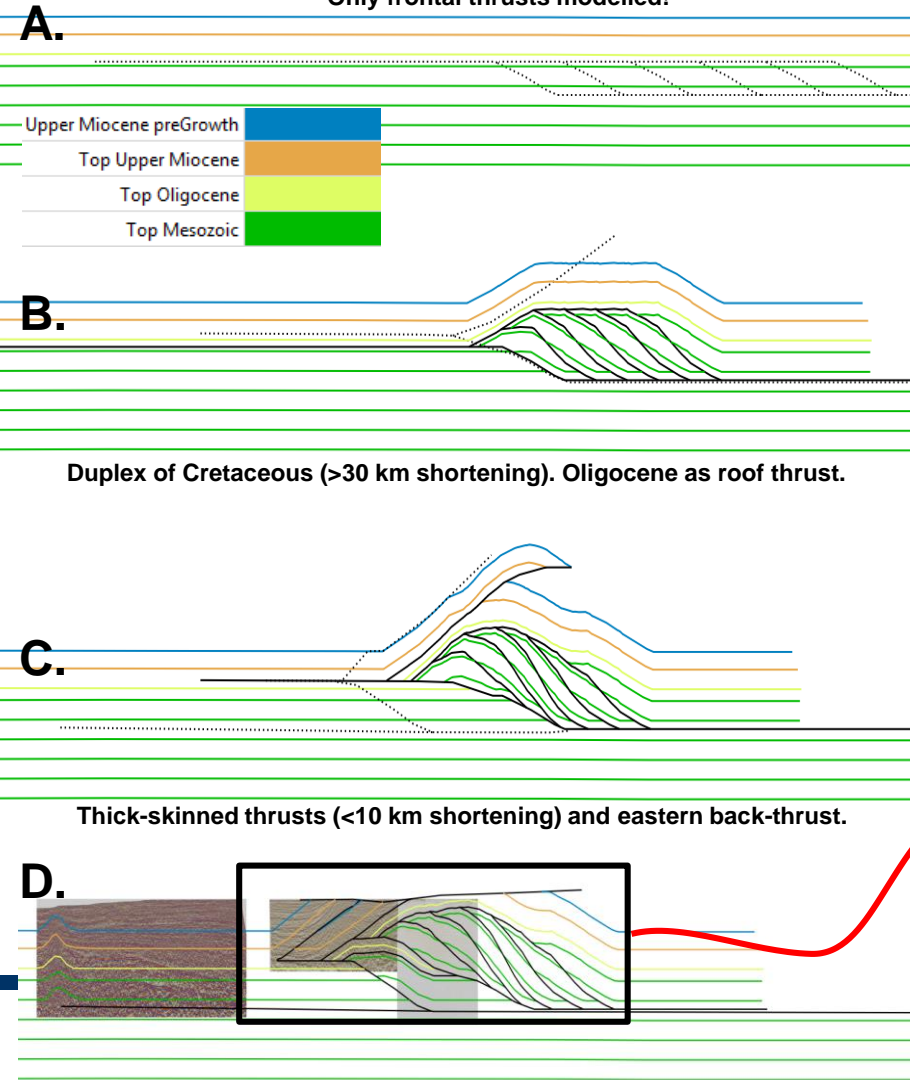
- Good detachment within Cretaceous (Aptian-Albian shale) and Oligocene (overpressure)
- Cretaceous forms duplexes
- Late thick skinned thrusts uplift area and accommodate a few km's of shortening.





# NW Albania Regional Line

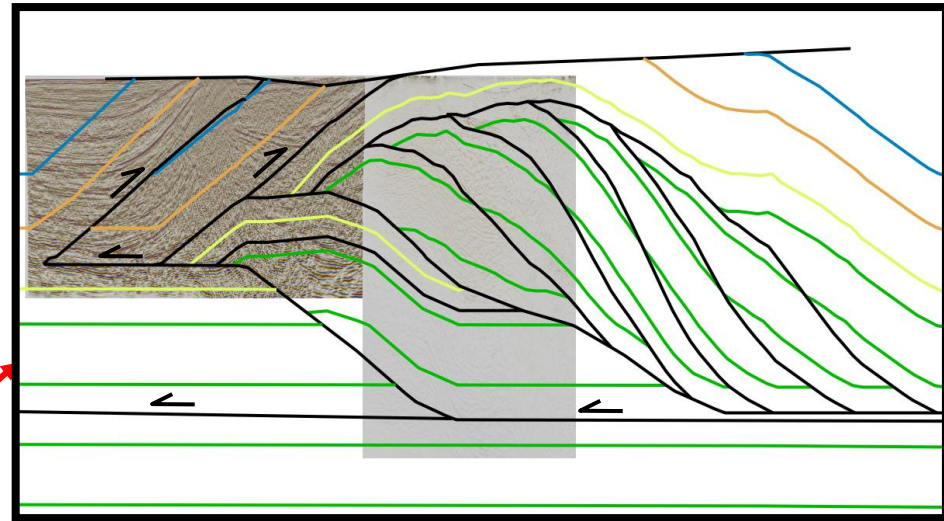
Only frontal thrusts modelled!



Duplex of Cretaceous (>30 km shortening). Oligocene as roof thrust.

Thick-skinned thrusts (<10 km shortening) and eastern back-thrust.

- Good detachment within Cretaceous (Aptian-Albian shales) and Oligocene (overpressure).
- Cretaceous forms duplexes
- Back thrusts follow the same detachment
- Late thick skinned thrusts uplift area and accommodate a few km's of shortening.

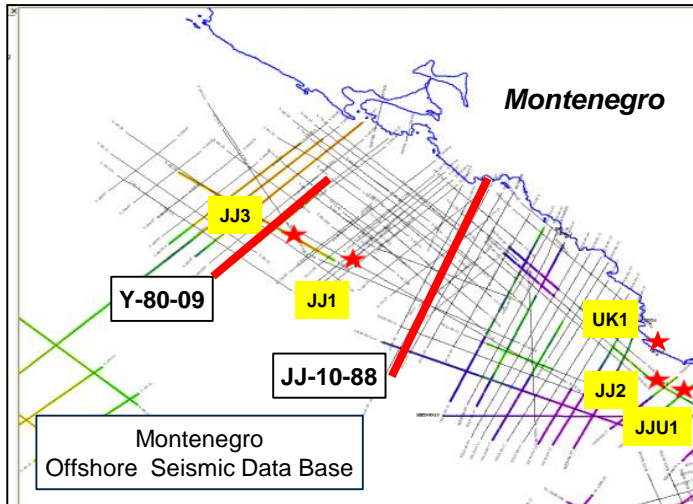


Thick-skinned thrusts, related back thrust and erosion

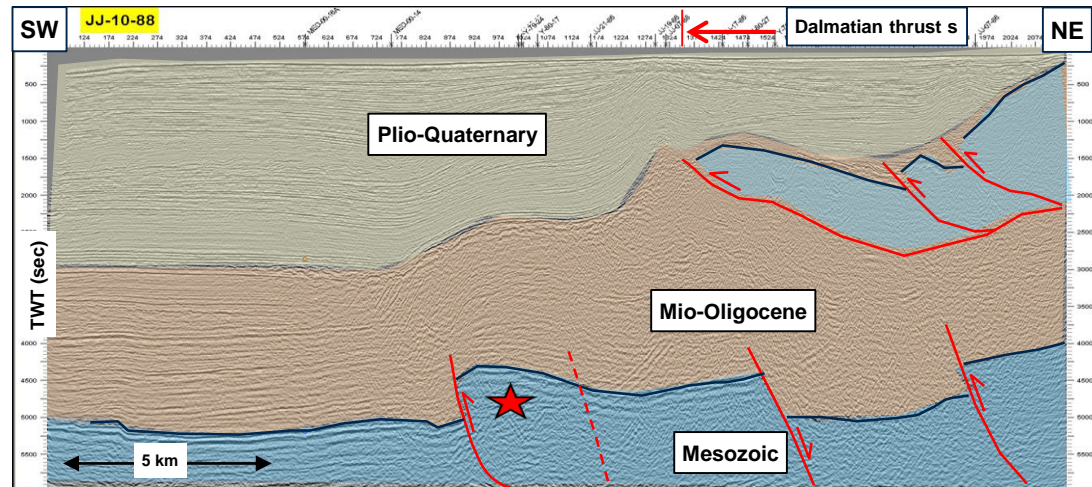
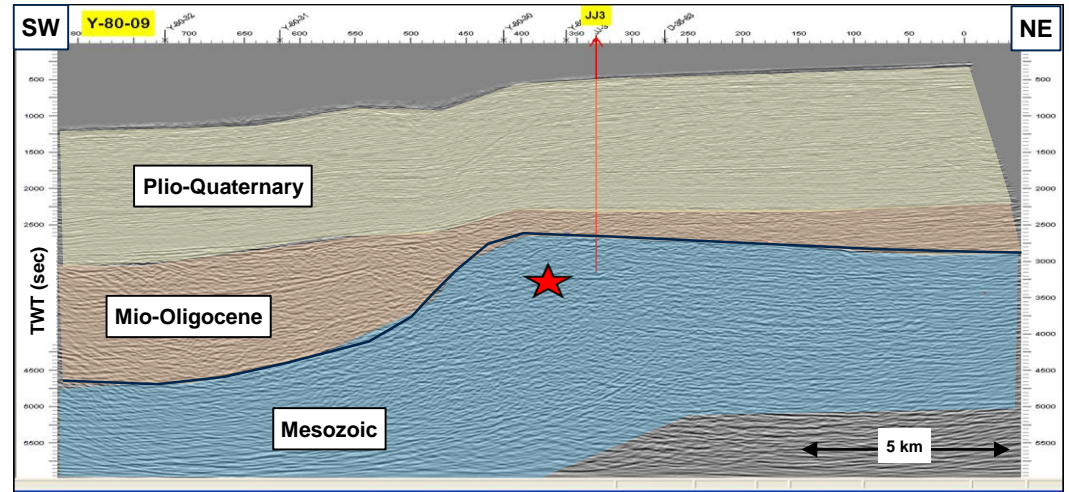
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# Offshore Montenegro

## Key Mesozoic Plays – Seismic Examples



Platform margin, either undeformed or slightly inverted as potential key play.



Original normal faults preserved and not inverted

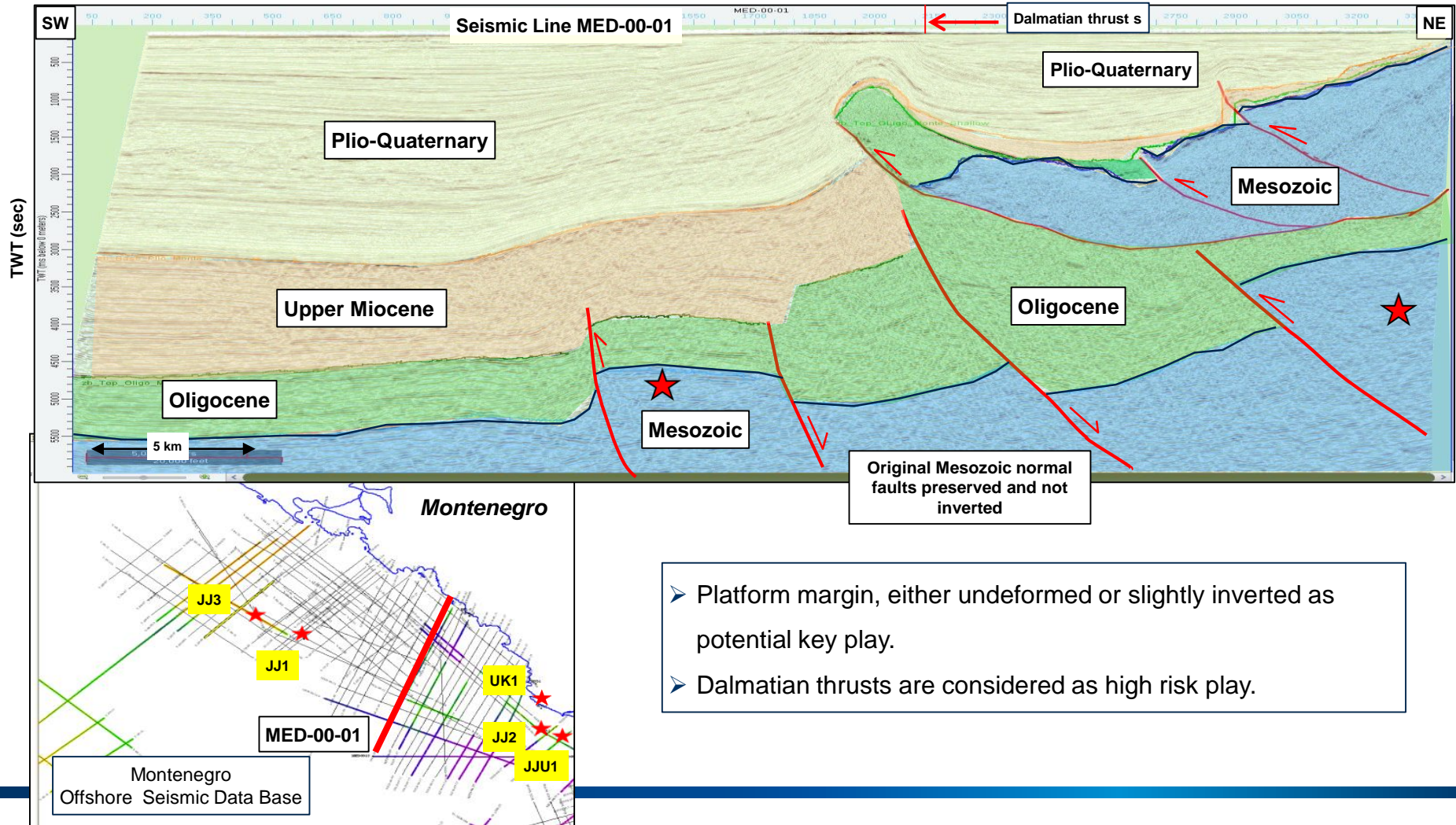
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# Offshore Montenegro

## Key Mesozoic Plays – Seismic Examples



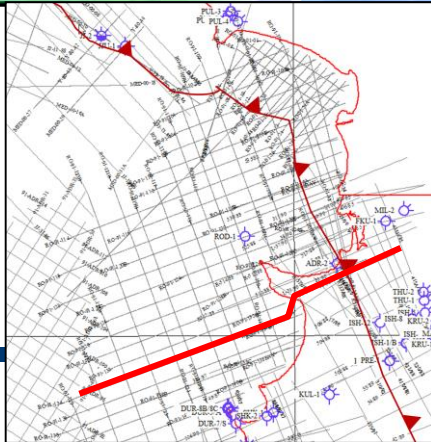
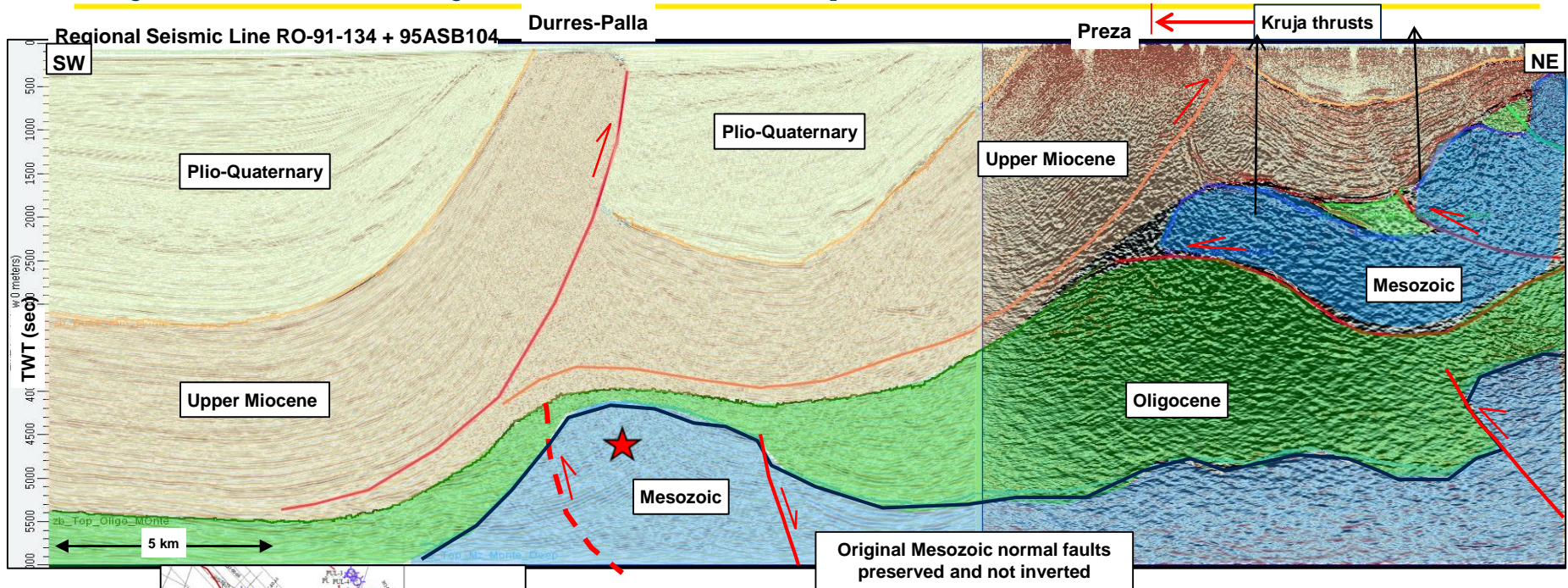
- Platform margin, either undeformed or slightly inverted as potential key play.
- Dalmatian thrusts are considered as high risk play.





# Off - Onshore NW Albania

## Key Mesozoic Play – Seismic Examples

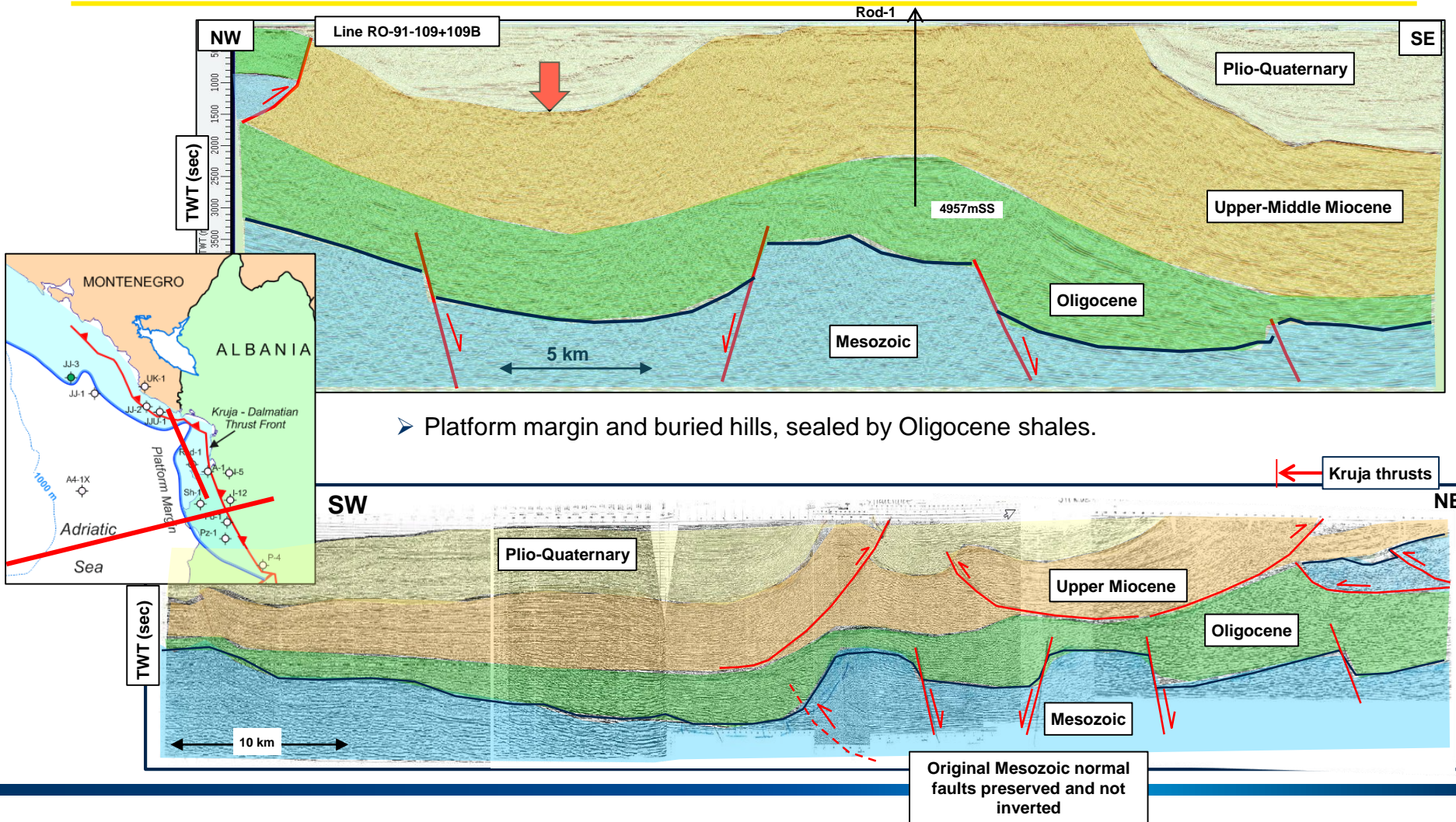


- Spectacular Neogene backthrusts: Durres-Palla; Preza
- Platform margin, either undeformed or slightly inverted as potential key play.
- Kruja (Dalmatian) thrusts are considered as high risk play.





# SPL Evidences and Rodoni High



# Conclusions

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- Structural forward modeling helps to constrain the structural model of the Apulian Foreland SE border.
- The Dalmatian-Kruja Mesozoic carbonates have been subject of >30km of shortening in a thin-skinned style (hangingwall).
- The Mesozoic carbonates (foot wall) have been subject of < 10km shortening in a thick skinned manner.
- The Mesozoic thick-skin traps are considered of low exploration risk:
  - platform margin; buried hills or inverted structural highs.
  - In-situ and mature source rocks.
  - Oligocene shales as regional seal.



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